

CEREBUS WORLD TOUR

**PITTSBURGH
PENNSYLVANIA
SEP. 9, 1995**



(see back cover
for details)

CEREBUS mothers & daughters

47



**197
AUG**

CEREBUS

NO. 197 AUGUST 1995

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**MOTHERS
&
DAUGHTERS**
a novel

•
BOOK ONE
(Cerebus 151 to
Cerebus 162)
Flight

•
BOOK TWO
(Cerebus 163 to
Cerebus 174)
Women

•
BOOK THREE
(Cerebus 175 to
Cerebus 186)
Reads

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BOOK FOUR
(Cerebus 187 to
Cerebus 200)
Minds

MONTHLY

ALL CONTENTS
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DEAR BILL SCHANES:

I had originally intended to fill this space (and a few of the ensuing pages) with a letter reiterating the self-publisher assistance program outlined in the previous issue under the title 'The Situation Room'.

Of course, in the interim *The Comics Journal* has published its 'exposé' on the Diamond/DC deal, confirming a number of rumours that have been circulating since it was signed at the end of April. This put me in an awkward situation. I found it difficult to proceed with 'business as usual' dealing with Diamond as I had (for the most part successfully, I think) with John and Milton at Capital. At the same time I didn't want to take up too much space with the implications I saw in Paul Levitz's leaked memo and, consequently, overshadow the more important issue of self-publishing in the context of DC and Diamond's 'New Dynamics'.

After a number of false starts and much introspection I came to the conclusion that it was more sensible to take a few days to assess the changes in the comic-book landscape (as I mentioned in my note to you which accompanied the faxed proof of 'The Situation Room').

Reviewing my notes from the Toronto 'New Dynamics' meeting (as well as the questions I had prepared before being made aware that only retailers were to be included in the 'question and answer' session; was it my imagination, Bill, or were you looking directly at me when you made the announcement?), I realised that a more comprehensive piece was called for than I had originally envisioned. I intend to avoid 'past history' (where possible) and confine my observations to the 'here and now' and the future of the direct market as I see it. Certainly Diamond Comic Distributors finds itself well positioned for the new reality we all face and I hope to illustrate how I see self-publishing as a key, central element in the future of the direct market.

I'll be addressing the letter to Steve Geppi, under the heading (oddly enough) 'Dear Steve Geppi'. I know you'll understand that I intend no personal or professional slight against you in doing so. I will be faxing the piece to Steve around the end of June. Everyone else will see it when it is printed in this space next issue.

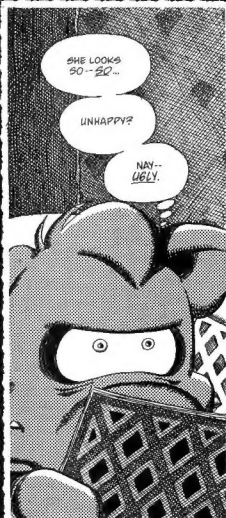
I want to thank you again for extending me the courtesy of being permitted to attend the 'New Dynamics' meeting in Toronto. I hope you have enough data on the concentration of stores in Southern Ontario to recognize that there *is* a pressing demand for a Toronto-area warehouse or (at the VERY least) drop-ship station, and that Montreal is about as much a solution to the problem as a Buffalo warehouse would be to retailer needs in Manhattan (end of nationalistic 'pitch').

I'm pleased to report that morale among self-publishers has never been higher than at the present time. Please let Steve know, at your convenience, that the letter is on its way. I look forward to discussing my observations with him after he has had a chance to review.

I remain,

Yours truly,

Dave Sim



SHE LOOKS
SO--SO--

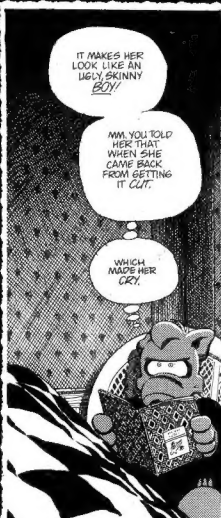
UNHAPPY?

NA--
UGLY.



SHE CUT OFF
HER HAIR--
WHY DID SHE
CUT OFF HER
HAIR?

YOU TOLD HER TO,
YOU TOLD HER ONLY
SLUTS AND HARLOTS
HAVE LONG HAIR



IT MAKES HER
LOOK LIKE AN
UGLY, SKINNY
BOY!

MM, YOU TOLD
HER THAT
WHEN SHE
CAME BACK
FROM GETTING
IT CUT,

WHICH
MADE HER
CRY.



NOT RIGHT THEN, OF
COURSE, IF SHE CRIES
WHEN YOU'RE AROUND
YOU YELL AT HER AND
THREATEN TO HIT HER...
BUT WHEN YOU'RE NOT
AROUND SHE CRIES
QUITE A BIT...

THAT'S WHERE
SHE GOT THE POUCHES
UNDER HER EYES

FROM
CRYING AND NOT
GETTING ENOUGH
SLEEP.

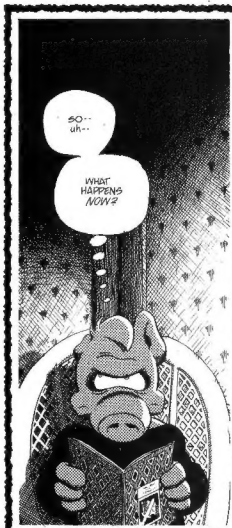


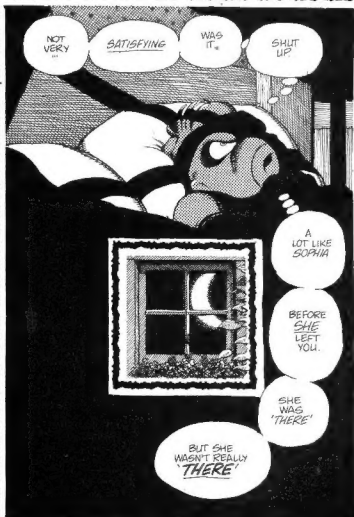
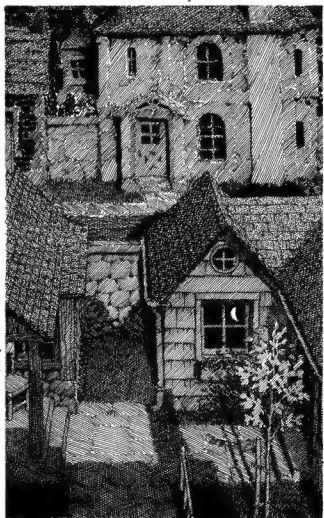
YOU TOLD HER IT'S HER
'DUTY' TO KEEP YOU COMPANY
AT NIGHT-- SHE ISN'T
ALLOWED TO SLEEP
UNTIL YOU'RE FINISHED
READING, EVEN THOUGH
SHE HAS TO WORK
IN THE MORNING
AND YOU DON'T...

JUST ONE OF
YOUR MANY
RULES

LIKE 'NO TALKING
AFTER DINNER'
(TALKING AFTER
DINNER GIVES
YOU INDIGESTION)











SWEETER



IT'S OKAY,
JAKA.

CEREBUS
IS RIGHT
HERE

GO BACK
TO SLEEP



MMMMMM



OKAY! -- YOU MAKE
HER HAPPY TO STAY
WITH CEREBUS NO
MATTER WHAT

AND YOU MAKE
IT SO CEREBUS
NEVER HITS HER
AGAIN -- EVER

OR THREATENS
TO HIT HER?



AYE.

AYE, THAT'S
A GOOD
ONE.



IF SHE'S GOING TO BE
HAPPY TO STAY WITH CEREBUS
NO MATTER WHAT, CEREBUS
WON'T NEED TO HIT HER --
OR THREATEN TO HIT HER

IT'S A
DEAL.

YOU AND JAKA HAVE BEEN MARRIED FOR TWO YEARS. THINGS ARE GOING VERY WELL FOR BOTH OF YOU.

YOU SPEND YOUR DAYS READING BLOODTHIRSTY TALES OF MILITARY MAYHEM ANTICIPATING JAKA'S RETURN FROM HER JOB.

YOU HAVE LITTLE ON YOUR MIND BESIDES YOUR EVENING MEAL-- JAKA HAS BECOME SOMETHING OF A GOURMET COOK.

THAT CHANGES THIS PARTICULAR DAY, FOR THIS IS THE DAY YOU SEE YOUR NEW NEIGHBOUR FOR THE FIRST TIME.

THE HOT SUMMER SUDDENLY SEEMS A LOT HOTTER.

A LOT HOTTER.

SHE FINISHES HANGING OUT HER WASH.

AND GOES BACK INSIDE HER HOUSE

YOU DON YOUR HEAVY BLUE SWEATER (THE ONE JAKA HAS SAID MAKES YOU LOOK THINNER) AND STROLL OUTSIDE

WHISTLING VERY LOUDLY, YOU SQUIFF A FEW STRAY LEAVES INTO A PILE-- YOU GRIP THE TRUNK OF THE SAPLING, SHAKING IT SLIGHTLY (AS IF TESTING ITS SOLIDITY).

AT A LOSS FOR ANY FURTHER ACTIVITY, YOU RETREAT INSIDE, BATHED IN SWEAT

YOU REPEAT THIS RITUAL OVER THE COURSE OF SEVERAL DAYS-- NOT PARKING-- EVEN BRIEFLY-- TO LOOK AT THE HOUSE NEXT DOOR.

ON THE SIXTH DAY, THE SOUND OF THE DOOR OPENING BEHIND YOU MAKES YOU JUMP.

JAKA HAS COME HOME EARLY FOR SOME REASON.

I'm sorry I'm so nosy, but aren't
you hot in that sweater?

**(Your throat has gone dry and clutches
at your words) Nay (coughing). Nay, Cerebus
has spent a lot of time in the southlands.
Cerebus doesn't get hot like most people.**

You're lucky. I've never been outside of Palnu.
My name's Joanne. (an awkward silence)
I guess we're neighbours.

Cerebus is married (this is said too quickly).

(she misses the implication) Hey, me too. (another
awkward silence) Fred — he's my husband — Fred
isn't around much. He travels a lot on business.
(another awkward silence) I get lonesome sometimes.
Fred doesn't like me to (she gropes for an explanation)
He loves me a lot, you know? He likes me to (Fred's
will asserts itself in his absence) I just spend too much
time with my old friends, talking a lot of foolishness
instead of taking care of my responsibilities.

**(this is a very familiar refrain and you muse
aloud) Aye... Jaka's the same way
(Joanne seems to shrink within herself, as if
Fred himself has caught her in a major
transgression) (her withdrawal apparent, you
scramble mentally to recover lost ground)
Uh... she doesn't... she doesn't like Cerebus...
talking to people when she's at work.**

(her eyes widen at this. The blatant lie has reinforced
the tenuous connection. She glances over her shoulder
as if Fred might manifest himself in the kitchen at any
moment) Well, maybe we shouldn't be talking then.

(quickly) Nay. Cerebus wants to talk to you.

(for several moments she wrestles inwardly with this; a
long-suppressed fire reaches her eyes) I don't think
it's fair (she starts at the unexpected edge in her own
voice). I mean, it's just... (barely a whisper) talking.

**Aye. It doesn't mean (you're quoting Jaka now
and feel a twinge of guilt as you do so) you
love him any less. (you can't help yourself;
Jaka's words are your best weapon) After all,
you're his wife, not his prisoner.**

(melting at this, she smiles. Seeing her smile, you melt
in turn) I guess we've got a lot in common, huh?

**(at first you think she's referring to herself
and Jaka; it takes you a moment to merge with
the lie) Aye. (the answer is suited to both
interpretations; a mixture of shame and
exhilaration rises within you)**

As long as we get our responsibilities taken care of
(she is unused to making the rules for herself and
pauses to choose her words carefully) we could talk
some more (unexpectedly, she has found herself
outside Fred's prison; her vertiginous reaction
begs the security of qualification:.) Maybe.
(it's okay to be outside the cage, isn't it?)

**(there is a stirring in your groin)
Cerebus would like that.**

(afraid of losing the small victory) Well, okay.

(afraid of losing the small victory) Okay.

(smiling her relief and her gratitude) 'Bye.

(smiling from your groin) 'Bye.





SHE IS RETICENT AT FIRST, listening and smiling. Soon, however, her thin trickle of comment becomes a mighty stream of observation and then a raging torrent of confession. She pours forth the story of her twenty (be still, your throbbing groin) summers of existence. Frequently she edges around her subject, cautious and restrained at its perimeter — the truth straddles the fence of what she is saying and what she cannot, will not, must not say.

She had known Fred all of her life. He was a business associate of her father's, a family friend (practically a relative, she observes — the observation draining the light from her eyes as it is enunciated for the first time). Between her fifteenth and sixteenth years the physicality of onrushing womanhood had taken her (and everyone else) by surprise. Fred became a more frequent visitor in their household and his attentions paid to her, while circumspect, became — unmistakably — different. Her anxiety and confusion at this turn of events were compounded by the fact that she seemed to be the only member of the family to note the change.

When she attempted to broach the subject with her father (whose perfection in her eyes was beyond dispute), she found him to be uncharacteristically ill-at-ease with the topic. He deflected her overtures as best he could, mouthing platitudes and non sequiturs with equanimity. When she persisted, became insistent, he cut her off in mid-sentence and advised her that it was a 'woman problem' and told her to 'ask your mother'.

Her mother, while appearing to misdirect the discussion, was actually quite direct (in her circuitous fashion) with her counsel. She cast malicious deprecations and aspersions on all of the boys whose attentions Joanne had inadvertently engaged. She related the woeful history of Great Aunt Agnes' marriage to a ne'er-do-well, a brigand 'silver of tongue and lazy as the day is long'. She asserted the tendency of the future to arrive before one was aware that the present was departing. She acknowledged defects in Fred's physical appearance but insisted that 'you can't tell a book by its cover'.

When Joanne attempted to restore her original inquiry to its intended form, characterizing Fred's attentions as 'unwelcome and improper', her mother had slapped her, calling her 'ungrateful' and 'spoiled'. She informed Joanne that Fred was a gentleman who had been instrumental in assisting them to get established in the city, adding that Fred was probably the closest friend her father had in the world. If Joanne couldn't see her way clear to behaving decently towards a man who had been nothing but decent to her family, then... And at this point her mother had burst into tears.

Over a period of tumultuous weeks, Joanne had pieced the conversation together, had realised what was expected of her. Distraught at her inability to break through the barrier her father had erected between them — and around the subject — she watched him, in vain, for any sign of how he felt about the decision she had made. Even on her wedding day, she couldn't tell if he was happy about her betrothal or...

Of course, while you listen to all this — ostensibly attentive and thoughtful — your mind (and your eyes) are elsewhere. The heat wave — the longest in Palnu's history — exists for you as a series of vivid images and an internalized tempest of passion.



'Oh, that breeze sure feels good, doesn't it?'

She **must** know Cerebus can see her breasts. She **must**. She's wearing it on purpose. She wants Cerebus. She wants Cerebus to touch her. She wants Cerebus to make love to her. Maybe it's just an accident. Aye? Nay? How could she **not** know? She likes it. She likes Cerebus to look at her breasts. She isn't happy with her husband. She's happy with Cerebus.

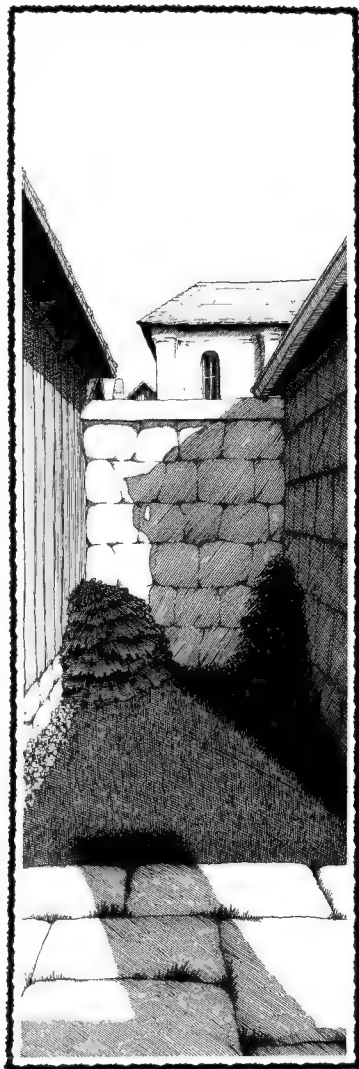
She wants Cerebus to make the first move.

'Goodness, this is your fourth glass of lemonade. You must have a sponge in your stomach.'

Just a little bit further and Cerebus will be able to see her nipple. Just a little bit further. She **must** know that Cerebus can see her breast. She's exposing herself to Cerebus. She wants Cerebus. She wants Cerebus to touch her breast. She wants Cerebus to make love to her. She's just waiting for Cerebus to make the first move. She probably fantasizes about making love to Cerebus the way Cerebus fantasizes about making love to her.

'What was I thinking of, putting a long-sleeve blouse over this? It's boiling today.'

Her nipple. Cerebus is looking at her nipple. She knows Cerebus is looking at her nipple. She wants Cerebus to look at her nipple. She's just wondering why it's taking Cerebus so long to make his move. But what if she **doesn't** want Cerebus? What if she slaps Cerebus and then tells Jaka that Cerebus touched her, that Cerebus tried to kiss her?



*Over and over the same tortured
ground: does she or doesn't she?*

*Will she or won't she? In your
imaginings it always happens the same
way: you call her over to the side of
the house to show her something
(but what?) and when she bends down
to look, you embrace her and kiss her.
And then you pull her down onto
the soft, warm grass and caress
one of her soft, perfect...*

*Over and over the same tortured
ground: does she or doesn't she?
Will she or won't she?*

*So absorbed are you in your anguished
speculations it escapes your notice that
the heat wave has, at last, broken.
Joanne wears more modest coverings
which serve only to inflame your
interest further.*

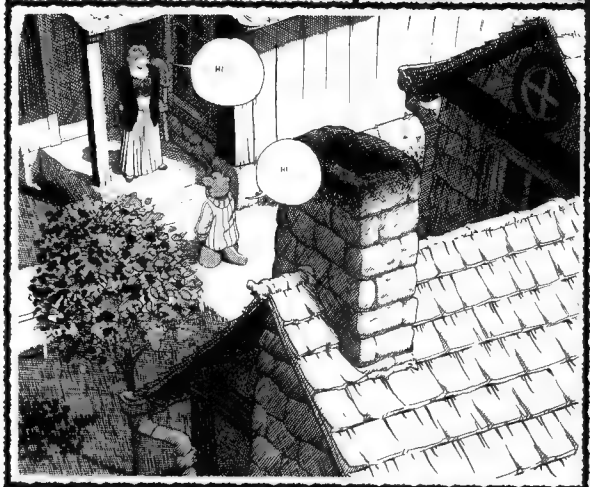
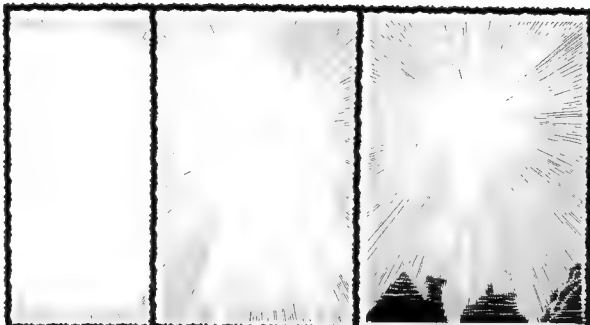
***They're under there.
Cerebus knows what they look
like and they're under there.***

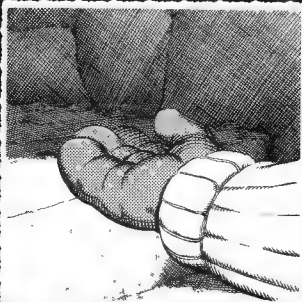
You think of me from time to time.

***We have a deal, right?
Jaka is happy with Cerebus
no matter what.***

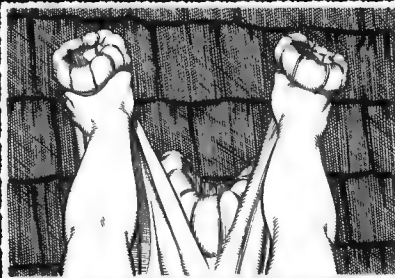
*The only voice in your
head is your own.*

*The first crisp, cool morning of
autumn awakens you to the fact that
the window of opportunity is
closing swiftly.*

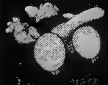












IT IS THE
FOURTH
LARGEST
OF THE SPHERES
OF THE GODS

FOUR TIMES
THE SIZE
OF THE
EARTH

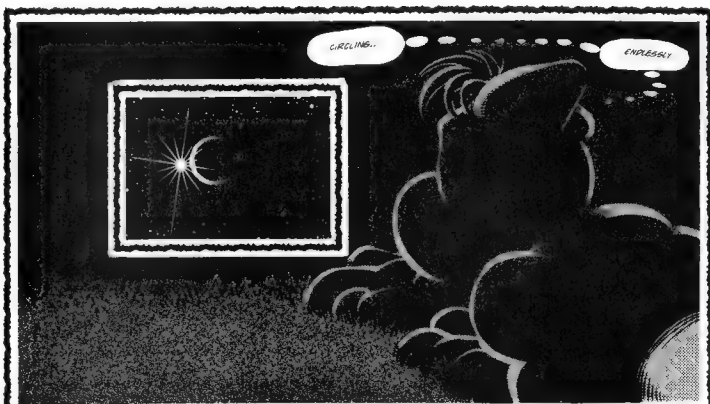
ITS CENTER
IS EXTREMELY
HOT

ITS ATTRACTION
IS STRONGEST
AROUND THE
MIDDLE AND
WEAKEST AT
THE TOP AND
BOTTOM

AS IT ROTATES
IT SWEEPS THIS
ATTRACT ON
AROUND IT

A SMALL COMPANION
- THE COLDEST PLACE
AMONG THE SPHERES OF
THE GODS - CIRCLES
IT ENDLESSLY





WHAT ARE
WE GOING
TO DO?



AH... YOU
REMEMBER

AIE...

YOU SAID,
'WE HAVE TO
KEEP IT A
SECRET'

AND SHE
ASKED...
(TREMBLING
WITH FEAR)

'KEEP WHAT
A SECRET?'

AND YOU
ANSWERED...?



'WHAT WE
JUST DID'

(THINKING
TO YOURSELF
'STUPID LITTLE
SLUT')

CEREBUS' BACK
HURTS

AND SHE
ASKED...?

CEREBUS
CAN'T
REMEMBER

SOMETHING
STUPID.

SHE
ASKED "THEN--
THAT'S ALL IT WAS--
WASN'T IT?"

CHEST-TO-CHEST
YOU COULD FEEL HER
HEART SQUIRMING
INSIDE HER BREAST
LIKE A TRAPPED
ANIMAL

(CHOKING
BACK HER
TEARS)

(IN A SMALL,
BROKEN
VOICE)

WHAT WE
DID -
"

AND RU
SAID "

"REBUS AN
REMEMBER...
JAKA CEREBUS
ALONE..

YOU SAID 'CEREBUS
DOESN'T LIKE TO
"ALONE"!

AND "WE
SAID "ON" AS
A LARGE DOOR
SLAMMED
SHUT INSIDE
HER CHEST

AND THEN "BIT
BY BIT, SHE LET
GO OF YOU

AND YOU
ROLLED
OVER IN
THE GRASS

"ANOTHER
AMEE!"





MESA, ARIZONA
**GATHERUM
'95**

RESCHEDULED

(YES, AGAIN!)

**NOVEMBER 11
1995**

10 am to 4 pm

**MESA COMMUNITY
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(See Next Issue For Details)

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- DAVE SIM & GERHARD*
- MARK OAKLEY
- STEVE BISSETTE
and more!

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10 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

**we'll be at Gatherum '95 as well.*

AARDVARK COMMENT

P.O. BOX 1674, STATION 'C', KITCHENER, ONTARIO N2G 4R2

Well, I'm going to take unfair advantage of my position as final authority in Aardvark Comment to answer this one in the body of the letter. It's too far-ranging to sum up without looking like I'm side-stepping the issues raised. Besides, the pseudonym Yvonne Rivers (Eve on Rivers) tells me this might be some sort of Official Response to 186:

Dear Mr. Sim,

It's a story I'm sure you've heard all too often, in which a friend of mine found himself involved in a lengthy relationship which, as you would put it, was shaping up to be a "merged permanence". He was a writer recently drawn back to the comics field and also working full-time. During their one- to two-year relationship, he found himself shelving his projects so he could finance her ambitions and wishes (which included her inking career, an ill-fated anthology magazine, a series of comics workshops and

the allegedly temporary financial support of a friend of hers). All the while she seemed to undertake a program to "domesticate" him — evidently wishing to change him without allowing herself to be changed as well. She made a scapegoat of him, blaming him for everything that went contrary to her wishes. After all, if she could blame him for everything men had ever done to her (which I suspect was fairly significant) ("Excessive" or "substantial" perhaps — "significant" implies to me that in some way holding him accountable for the actions of other men makes her actions forgivable or understandable. I don't agree in that case.), it was easier for her to not have to trust him or have him change her own outlook in even the slightest way. Not that you can say that he "asked for it", because he's something of an idealist. His wish to work it out was, as far as I'm concerned, noble. Stupid, but noble. (Disagree; stupid and noble

are contradictory terms to me. I think he was stupid, period.) One of my happiest moments, since the start of the year, was to hear that he'd packed his things and was planning to follow HIS original goals (you should see the work he's already produced!).

The entire story, of course, would seem to verify your theory of the "male seminal light" and "the female void" ("Ah, once again," smirks Viktor Davis to himself). (I'm well beyond the smirking stage — nice to see that some feminists might be getting there as well.) Except that your theory is not a theory, merely an observation. You could observe, after all, that the sky is usually blue, but that still doesn't mean that you understand WHY. And your observation would also fail to explain why sunrises and sunsets manifest as they do. Reads is an observation, and in order to argue with it on a reasoning level (not wanting to argue in circles until I'm Happy, again) I must either: 1) throw at you contrary observations ("yes, but sometimes the sky is RED"), which will also accomplish nothing, or 2) postulate a theory myself which can account for your observations and mine also.

And I don't really think it's any stretch for you or me to arrive at the reason why relationships which become parasitic appear to you to be situations in which the woman literally feeds on the man. That reason, of course, would have to be conditioning. (Nope — nice try.

The underpinning of feminism is that there is no difference between men and women besides their upbringing and training. Just thought I'd qualify this at the outset; I'm not in your rowboat with you. I think the differences between men and women are dramatic, profound and genetically implied.)

Even in "fair" households, where equality is preached and attempted/practiced, there is still the unspoken policy that boys are meant to grow up and become successful, while girls are meant to grow up and become married. It's drilled in, on a subconscious level. Every time a parent makes a speech about a child's future (the old "what are you going to DO with your life"), that speech takes different lines, determined by gender: "when you become a doctor/lawyer/preacher/teacher/journalist/accountant/etc./etc./etc." (for boys) and "when you get married" (for girls. Sure, this gets thrown at boys too, but not in the context of being the Primary Objective). With feminism and the relaxed social conditions, of course, there is a publicly acknowledged right that women have to choose to pursue a career (the hard road) OR choose to relax, marry and just focus on raising a family, having a comfortable life (provided the spouse is "tolerable") (I know a number of women who are raising families who don't have a career who would deeply resent the Kevillist notion that it's the 'easy way out'. At the very least they have to put up with you smirking at them.) — the latter being an option that boys don't have. Naturally, fewer are going to choose the career over the family (I'm sure you'll agree that anyone pursuing a lofty long-term career plan wonders COUNTLESS TIMES if the effort is WORTH it) — and the wonderful Barbie icon does more harm than good, because it teaches women that we can do both simultaneously, a grand lie in itself. (Yeah, well, don't blame it on men. You're genetically engineered to have kids and you've trained yourselves to believe you're worthless unless you have a fulfilling career on top of it. I don't recall a lot of men — pre-1970 — pushing heavily for this. Mother Bird can't sit on the eggs and hunt for food at the same time. I didn't create that problem.)

This conditioning is much more apparent when we look at one critical observation you make in *Reads*: the male tends to thrive on rationality, while the female tends to thrive on emotion. Our society still hasn't outgrown the notion that men are supposed to be "strong", emotionless rocks of Gibraltar, while women are supposed to be the emotional, caring, expressive sex. You'd STILL be hard pressed to find scenes in movies where Steven Seagal or Sylvester Stallone break into weeping fits or wail in desperation, and anytime a production comes out featuring a "strong" woman, it is still rare for the production to amount to anything more than parody. (I think society pretended to 'outgrow' men being strong, emotionless Rocks of Gibraltar. I tried it your way and didn't like it — strong and emotionless suits me better and I suspect that's genetic. I think the reason that they come across as parody is because they are contrary to female genetic nature. I really like *Thelma and Louise*, but I think it falls well outside the boundaries of likelihood.) Paste your own "comics" bad girls trend" quip here. While society has created more OPPORTUNITY for women (and adequately so; I feel no need to fight for female domination of the social workplace, unlike some extremists), the CONDITIONED STEREOTYPES (Genetic Natures) remain. And, therefore, a woman is not EXPECTED to be strong like a man is; not EXPECTED to take the hard road and build a career like a man is (except by feminists); not EXPECTED to base her attitudes on any rational basis like a man is. (Except by employers and co-workers who are often sadly disappointed.) In this way, it was actually a double wrong inflicted on women with the denial of the vote (which you felt was justified): women are socially conditioned to choose emotion and whim over rationality, and then were "justifiably" denied the vote for being exactly as they had been raised to be. (Disagree. Remember, I'm not in the rowboat with you. Genetics, not conditioning, are the foundations, to me.)

There are other factors which determine whether someone will be a "seminal light" or "devouring void", as well. Laziness (or even

simply a lack of ambition, rather than a wish to be lazy — there can be a difference) would be one, as would rapacious selfishness, which I feel was one of the larger factors that affected the relationship which I examined at the start of this letter. But these factors are seen in men as easily as women. You can't deny that. Perhaps in your field (that of comics), where the majority of people involved will be both male (super-hero stories which dominate the market are primarily male power fantasies, after all) and creative, you'd see a slightly different balance, but if you look outside the field at the world in general, you'd have to admit that these factors exist universally. (If that's the case — if women and men are equally parasitic in their natures — then why do we have alimony? Why do women need child support if they are up to the task of supporting themselves, their children AND parasitic men? Eliminate alimony and child support, and I'll be the first to acknowledge the existence of a universal 'some are lazy and some aren't' reality without reference to gender.)

Women can be lights also. You acknowledged this, when you gave the nod to people like Colleen Doran, Teri Wood and Coco Chanel. There ARE women deserving of attendance in that Big White Room of your Alan Moore anecdote, and who will flare as brilliantly as any of the "Illuminati" can. We have seen, now, why it seldom happens that way. But it can: it has with personages such as Anais Nin, Ayn Rand, Simone de Beauvoir, Georgia O'Keefe, Laurie Anderson and many others who have had the drive to carve their own single niche in our creative society (often with works unique to them alone), and continues to do so, even in the comics field, through people such as Nina Paley, Karen Berger, Faye Perovich, Roberta Gregory, Diana Schutz, Wendy Snow-Lang, Ann Nocenti, Kim Elizabeth... (Eight names? Okay. Will Eisner, Harvey Kurtzman, Robert Crumb, Alex Toth, Bernie Krigstein, Jim Steranko, Alan Moore, Neil Gaiman. I win.) The observation that is *Reads* has some merit, from what I've seen in the world around me, but blaming a gender, as opposed to a root cause, simply leads to the classic

moronic argument:

"Morons never do the wrong thing. They get their reasoning wrong. Like the fellow who says all dogs are pets and all dogs bark, and cats are pets, too, and therefore cats bark. Or that all Athenians are mortal, and all the citizens of Piraeus are mortal, so all the citizens of Piraeus are Athenians."

"Which they are."

"Yes, but only accidentally. Morons will occasionally say something that's right, but they say it for the wrong reason."

—conversation between Jacopo Belbo and Casaubon, from Umberto Eco's *Foucault's Pendulum*

(Depends on your point of view — since you're calling me a moron at this point in your letter, let me return the favour; I think the description transcribed here suits you to a 't'.)

One other reason women are less likely to become "Lights" is that when women take their pitfalls, it is often that much more difficult for them to rise above them. I'm speaking most specifically about Families. A screaming child is much more effective at killing a woman's creative light than would be a spouse who's worried about having enough money to get that sauna installed. And the former is NOT something that can be walked away from... **(But who is to be held accountable? You are genetically engineered to have children and to have the urge to have children to which your gender, in the majority, succumbs. What rational basis is there for making it the fault of and responsibility of the male? Of society? Of government?)**

The Void is universal. Men are often voids as well as women. We've already seen a few reasons why (laziness/lack of ambition and rapacious selfishness, characteristics not present in ALL men, nor are they present in ALL women). **(Once again, why is 95% of child support and alimony paid TO women BY men?)** In fact, even generalizing THIS much leaves out the fact that even the most brilliant creative person will have days when he or she will have to simply vegetate, and even the laziest person can be inspired to creativity. But I find this generalization easier to rationally

tolerate than a generalization based on gender. **(Of course you do; a big stew pot where everyone's the same is exactly what you're driving at. I don't buy it.)**

The problem rests in relationships themselves. In any relationship, there is always one person willing to work harder at making the relationship work than the other. This leads to a situation of submission and dominance, however subconscious this may be. And often, the dominant will become the void, drawing as much as he or she can out of the relationship (simply because he or she CAN), while the submissive will find that he or she has to continually sacrifice wishes, desires, goals, to accommodate this. It would seem that in your male-dominated occupation, the Female Void would happen to be the only type you have really truly encountered.

As for me, I have found this to be true in my own life as well. A woman as well as an admitted masochist and lover of women (some of your readers may recognize the pseudonym with which I sign this letter from some of my poetry and such), I have found that this rule has held true with every relationship but one, which was a rather odd tumultuous situation with the friend mentioned at the beginning of this letter. And because of my nature, I've often found myself the person of the pair used throughout the relationship (this statement is made after much honest and torturous reflection, not out of any martyr-type complex — it's more common that I blame myself for everything, and if I come to a conclusion such as this one, it cannot be without at least a large amount of validity). And even in the tumultuous exception I have just mentioned, the Light/Void roles were still there — we had just flip-flopped back and forth, exchanging those roles. **(Well, I'm not sure that your conclusion doesn't dovetail nicely with the martyr-type complex you describe. Recognizing that you were used in your relationships and that you blame yourself for everything — or are prone to — indicates to me a newfound self-awareness as a martyr-type and little besides.)**

The attitude I have developed is that the long-term relationship is a lie. That wonderful word "love", which can't be defined but is really

only a pitter-patter of self-induced euphoria that you experience when you decide that you've found the perfect partner, is a myth that seems to have been handed down to us from generations ago, and unlike the Santa myth, our forefathers never had the heart to tell us that it was all just a neat story. There is an inherent stupidity in the notion (that our entire society suffers from) that two people should be "bonded". To hell with that bondage. That is not to trash the idea of companionship completely; that is just to say, "Let's not delude ourselves that a relationship is going to last forever or be always in our best interests." My life of the past number of years has been one of exploration with Temporary Voids (and, yes, occasional loneliness, but a loneliness I've learned to live and be content with during its season — which I am convinced is the TRUE mark of strength). At the moment, I have a relationship with a woman. I don't "love" her — after a series of relationships that I was convinced were the "real thing", I don't know what that is. I enjoy her company very much (an emotional response, to be sure, but emotional aspects can certainly not be denied any more than other instincts, like survival, sex, or breathing), but I will not let her pre-empt my ambitions or supersede in my life, nor do I have any intentions to supersede in hers. I appreciate her, certainly, and that's all I ask her to feel for me. But we aren't planning on a "forever". This may seem cold, but Eve understands it (and understands WHY I feel this way) and our relationship has consequently been much less torturous and oppressive than the vast majority of my past relationships. **(My own solution has been to focus on the 'exclusivity' I've decided is necessary — on both parts — if a relationship is to have a fighting chance — coupled with a fixed, renewable term. We renewed in January and renewal is coming up again in July. I've found that knowing your 'option' can be dropped is a great motivator to behave better.)**

There are a few more specific items from your writings which I must comment on, beginning with your reference to the '60s as a Male Decade/sexual generation as opposed to a Female Decade. How can you say that emotions took a

back seat? This was the "Love Generation", the primary birth of compassionate conservatism, the whim-blowing prairie of confused wanderings, in the search for a fulfillment that was more emotional in intent than rational. The freedom and enlightenment sought were very much an emotional freedom and enlightenment — there was very little rational about the enlightenment brought back from the long trips down the Morrison Wilderness grand highway. There was very little practical about the revolutions proposed during the spirit (read: feeling) of the times. I would argue that this would be more likely the emergence of the Void sensibility which plagues our media and corporations now. (Exactly so. In fact, I saw this in the proofs when I was correcting that section and was set to wondering what pernicious spirit had compelled me to get it so completely upside-down and backwards. I let it go to find out the extent to which that pernicious spirit infects my readership. You're the first one to notice. Congratulations.)

"Sadly for him, no bang." Conditioning has, of course, not spared sexuality. No matter how open about it we've become, we still can't openly speak about sexual desire without being "controversial" or at least "brash". Oh, sure, sex education is taught in schools: they teach that boys have this thing called a penis that enters a girl and releases sperm which fertilize eggs and make babies. They teach NOTHING of desires. Why? It'd be "indecent". I suppose — more likely, humanity is still ashamed to have a bodily function as animalistic as sex (we're supposed to be Better than animals). Can you possibly have any idea how much of a burden was lifted from me at age fifteen when I discovered that there was actually a WORD for what I'd been fighting for perhaps six years previous ("masochism")? It meant, of course, that I wasn't the only filthy being on earth who FELT a desire such as this — and once I knew I wasn't ALONE on the planet, I became all that much more able to tolerate life with myself, having the hope that someday I would be able to RESOLVE what I was going through (which ultimately, with help, I have). We can't NOT talk about sexual desire: it won't simply

go away. Sadly for us, no bang. Women are taught that sex is sinful, at most a bodily function we are to tolerate in order to keep our husbands happy. We're certainly not supposed to ENJOY it — that would make us harlots! Well, why NOT enjoy it? Show me one law, one scripture, or better yet one rational argument why a woman is not supposed to enjoy sex! Even arguing theologically, a Christian would have to admit that if God created sex and if all of God's creation (before the corruption from Satan) was good, then sex must be good (I do not believe that that argument is in any way moronic). And I know that sexuality CAN be wonderful. Does that make me a harlot (I make it sound like I've had an awful lot of relationships prior to making my decision to stick with short-term relationships; I haven't and there have been many long stretches in between)? If so, then I choose to be proud of that. Women NEED sensual freedom. Any look through the Harlequins or Cosmo magazines will tell you that. Really, there isn't much difference between these publications and the more tasteful of the Playboy-type product (read: pornography), except that they're less visual and more exploratory. "No bang" is a situation where both members of a couple lose — however, one member doesn't lose quite so visibly (indeed, many women can indefinitely live in a state of denial of their need, thanks to the wonders of conditioning). (You won't get any argument from me about women enjoying sex, but I think they lack self-awareness that they prefer to explore very safe parameters of the act and prefer that sex be subordinate to the tactile and the emotional. A female retailer friend of mine had something of an epiphany when her husband said to her, 'You know, sometimes fucking is just fucking.' I know a lot of women who still have a problem with this in their relationships, denying their mates sex because doing it when they aren't aroused emotionally and in a romantic mood diminishes the act for them — physical release for its own sake or their partner's making them feel cheap or animalistic or taken-for-granted or some such. Although it contains overtones of genetics I would imagine this large, troublesome issue is mostly the result of

conditioning and most women's disinclination to see the other side of the debate.)

You contradict yourself dreadfully in terms of the word "violence". Near the end of issue 186, you include violence as a male trait ("...we have more of it than she does. More violence, more creativity, more Light"). Yet, at the close of issue 185, you state, "There is no such thing as Thinking Violence. Violence, by its nature is Unthinking. Violence is Emotional (in a word). Emotion is Void Residue, the Emptiness between our molecules which is as One with the Eternal Night." This appears to be a double standard on your part, claiming the aggressive nature of violence as favorable and Male, while the unfortunate repercussions of violence are unfavorable and therefore Female. Never mind that this is a throwback to the myths of Eve and Pandora as claiming all the evils of the world to be female in origin (as does much of Reads). It is still contradictory and cannot be had both ways. Additionally, the veiled undercurrent of that latter statement is that domestic violence must then be the fault of the victim, who, through her emotional arguing (as opposed to Male Rational), is at fault for MAKING the abuser become angry and abusive. And if you indeed agree with this statement, then you are refusing to acknowledge that emotional arguments are dually engaged and disregarding the fact that men will just as often engage in an emotional argument. (Whoa, whoa, whoa — the violence was not thrown in there as a positive male trait. What I was attempting to say was that we have more of the bad and the good. Aggressiveness is good — to me — in the sense that I'm answering your letter aggressively. On the domestic violence thing, look at my previous interruption of your letter for my qualification of that observation. Emotional arguments are enough to drive you mad as a male, but the only options are to take it in stride or leave. At NO TIME did I suggest that the answer was to hit her. Take it in stride or leave — two choices.)

Reads is still a product of emotion, as rational as you may have made it. In fact, in a broader sense, comics (and the arts themselves) are more a woman's domain, in

that they thrive on emotion. Stories, paintings, music and the like will often entertain, or make one think, but they are chiefly designed to make one FEEL. Case in point: your revelation of the kitchen knife incident from *Cerebus*' past. Comics, as Wade likes to point out to me (and which is how he first interested me in the field), are sensual novels. Having illustration, they involve the sense of sight. The text, free of extraneous description, is allowed to become lyrical, thus involving the sense of sound. And the best illustration also adds texture, thus involving the sense of touch. Comics don't really have a large repertoire for providing the senses of smell and touch (nor do other media), but they otherwise heavily utilize the senses. And if they utilize the senses — if they make a reader experience/feel, they are then appealing to the reader on an emotional level. Looking again at *Reads* as being emotional, it is still a product of bitterness toward Deni Loubert and any other women you'd worked toward. Merged Permanence with — as was the decision to swear off Merged Permanence, from which the crucial chapters of *Reads* were born. (Well, you've jumbled a lot of things up together here. Sure I use emotion in my work. My characters are not me. Various emotions are among the strongest colours on the palette and any observation of the human condition goes into the writer's repertoire [to mix a metaphor]. The mistake emotional people make is in *feeling* that, because I can document emotion accurately, I must be an active participant. To quote the Zulli character in 193, 'I have a speculative nature — it posed no great difficulty.' I certainly try to communicate as much sensory stimuli as I can in three hundred issues. Like most emotional beings, you're mistaking the reaction to the sensory stimuli for the stimuli themselves. The book IS designed to make you — and people like you — FEEL. It is a common misapprehension that *Reads* was an emotional work because most people had an emotional reaction to it. Those are two very different things and one of the linchpins of my argument.)

Sure, you're bitter. How can you NOT be bitter? I won't deny that

bitterness had a very large hand in my own decision. Bitterness doesn't make your decision to swear off Merged Permanence a horrible one; it just helps to explain how the decision came about. Likewise your decision to choose *Cerebus* over Deni Loubert. Sure, it was a selfish choice. But how can anyone truly begrudge it of you, knowing you wouldn't have been truly happy (there're naughty emotions, again!) with *Cerebus* being forced to take a lesser place in your life — perhaps to be shelved entirely? (I'm not bitter. I did not write the story out of bitterness. Issue 186 was as clear and concise as I could be on the subject at hand. It is a hallmark of emotional beings that they have to ascribe emotional motivations where they don't exist. Why is that? What makes you so... vertiginous... at the prospect of someone who doesn't make primary decisions based on emotion? Food for speculation. Thanks.) In fact, your choice to swear off Merged Permanence is at least honorable in that you are now up-front with women that *Cerebus* and your ability to create are to be unconditionally the highest priority in your life. Most people aren't willing to be this up-front and fair, because to do so, they'd have to admit to themselves that they are somewhat selfish. A little selfishness is a healthy thing. (And a lot of selfishness is an even healthier thing, in my view. I'm always amused by the people who call *Cerebus* 'self-indulgent'. Well, what else? Can you imagine praising a movie because it's 'audience-indulgent' or 'investor-indulgent'? Or contrasting someone's bad lifestyle as 'self-indulgent' instead of 'wife-indulgent' or 'family-indulgent' or 'religion-indulgent' which are GOOD lifestyles? Strange fucking planet, man.)

Finally, I would like to address your comments to Seth, in issue 193, about women testing the boundaries to see what they can get away with. Men do this too, just in a different way. "Will there be serious repercussions if I look at other women," they wonder, "and if not, then will I be able to get away with going to the strip shows with the guys? Can I push her so far that she'd be forgiving of minor infidelities? How about a full-fledged affair?" This especially happens in the more domineering

men: "Can I push her around a little, to prove my point? Or threaten to hit her? Well, if she's stayed with me now that I've threatened to hit her, will she stay if I actually DO? Repeatedly? More severely?" (A very eloquent point on the incremental nature of abuse. I don't think the 'looking at other women' or 'going to strip shows' belong in there. I wouldn't have much respect for a guy who walks around with his gaze averted in case he sees another woman. I also don't have much respect for a guy whose head swivels like something out of a Warner Brothers cartoon to check out some babe when he's with his wife or girlfriend. But a purely testosterone-based aesthetic reaction — without whistles or lewd remarks — seems natural, honest and innocently pleasurable. Strip shows, porno mags and comics, videos, etc., I can't see the harm in. It's just 'looking'. If it becomes obsessive à la Joe Matt, that's something else, or if the guy is trying to pick up a stripper, then you're talking about infidelity, which isn't just 'looking'. The Light/Void relationship is universal in this aspect, as well. To say that it is a gender-related thing is to make the egocentric presumption that one gender has full authority, while the other gender merely flutters against the bars, testing that authority. It's bad enough that the dominant and submissive both make this assumption; let's not propagate this myth. (I'm not sure it's a myth. I think people tend to attract people who emphasize their own flawed natures in a relationship and the best bet is to try to get rid of your flaws by whatever means are necessary or accept the consequences as graciously as possible.)

Well, I have not come here fighting reason with emotion or with the denunciation of reason. I have approached rationality with rationality. Let's hope I have given you some things to think about. After all, reason is not entirely BEYOND the scope of our grasp... (Never said it was, Yvonne. Let's hope I've given you some things to think about.)

Yours truly,

Yvonne Rivers
Out west, somewhere.

★★★★★★★★

Thieves & Kings

A
CEREBUS
PREVIEW

I first saw Mark Oakley's *Thieves & Kings* quite a while back. Mark had sent me the first fourteen pages in photocopy form. I thought there was a lot of merit in his work, but not knowing very much about his abilities to produce pages on a deadline (always an important variable in giving advice), I advised him to consider doing ash-cans at first and to try building his audience in local stores until he was certain he had the aptitudes necessary.

Well, I got back quite a snotty little note, as I recall, taking issue with a number of my suppositions and recommendations. (I just talked to Mark on the phone and we're both a little vague on the substance of the exchange, but this sums it up for the most part: 'Nice first effort, kid; why not just get your toes wet first?' and 'Fuck you. I'm ready now.')

When he sent me the first two issues, it was apparent that he had reworked a lot of it, that some of the edges were still a little rough — but it was also clear that he was more than ready to tackle the challenge of self-publishing.

I'm not a big manga fan, but it really doesn't take a manga fan to recognize the Japanese influence in Mark's pages. It also doesn't take a *Comics Journal* reviewer to recognize that *Thieves & Kings* is a much richer tapestry than a 'manga fanzine'.

It was funny to hear Mark talking about the self-publishing 'wannabes' who bring their books up to him at conventions for his assess-

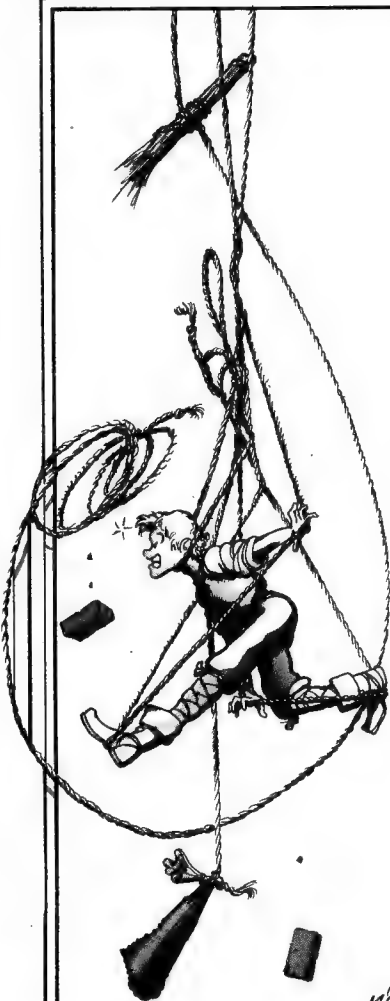
ment (self-publishing is like a tour of duty in Northern Island — inside of six months you're a grizzled veteran). He sees the same reaction all the time. They may not say it out loud, but as he's cautioning them to get their toes wet first, a lot of them have the 'Fuck you, I'm ready now' look in their eyes.

Thieves & Kings as it exists is a commendable and enticing piece of creativity. Of course, the style and aptitude that are rising from beneath the pages, issue by issue, give promise that Mark has only scratched the surface to this point.

See, he heard that Paul Pope — in addition to his prolific output on *THB* and his other projects — fills a hardcover sketchbook a month. So (of course) Mark has to do that too. Now he's discovering the foundation of my assertion, 'First you get good, then you get fast, then you get good and fast.' Watch out, world. You ain't seen nothin' yet.

Thieves & Kings subscriptions (\$20 per year Canadian — include 7% GST and 8% PST in Ontario — for six issues: \$30 per year in Canadian funds outside Canada) and back issues (\$2.35 U.S. and \$3.15 Canadian — GST added; Ontario residents add 8% PST — include \$1.30 for postage and secure packaging) are available from I BOX PUBLISHING, P.O. Box 6671, Station 'A', Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5W 1X5).

And here's a brand-new story from Mark Oakley, y'all...



So there I was at this huge, four day comic book thing in Chicago, where everybody in the universe who had anything to do with comics was in attendance. It was only natural that I should bump into Dave Sim.

That it happened to be while I was hanging around in somebody's kitchen was perhaps less likely. But that's how it was. Anyway, two things came of it.

#1. I got the truth behind the shattered beer mug and plastic chair story. (Send me a buck and I'll let you in on it.)

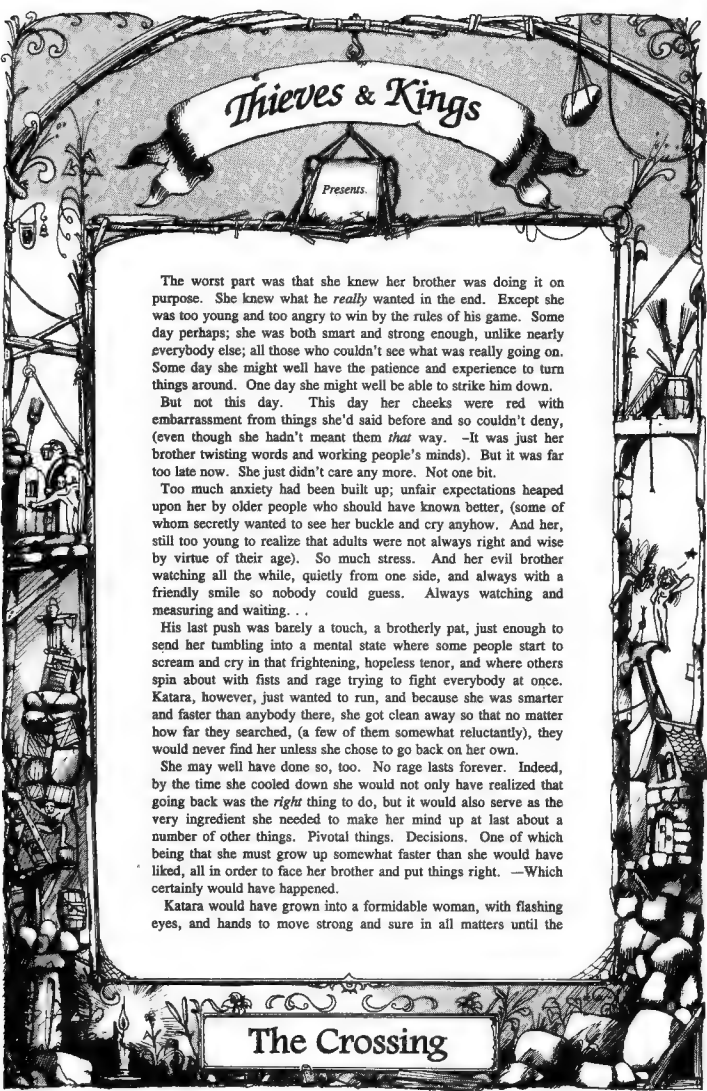
#2. This Cerebus Preview.

Incidentally, this preview is a *Thieves & Kings* Cerebus exclusive. Meaning, I looked through all the material I've published to date, (Issue #6 of *Thieves & Kings* ships/shipped early July), and I couldn't for the life of me decide what scene to pull for the preview.

Then I thought, "Hey! Why not send Dave a ten pager just for Cerebus?"

So I did.

—This story is about what happened to young Katara four years ago shortly after Rubel the thief left with his grandfather for the Ocean. .



Thieves & Kings

Presents.

The worst part was that she knew her brother was doing it on purpose. She knew what he *really* wanted in the end. Except she was too young and too angry to win by the rules of his game. Some day perhaps; she was both smart and strong enough, unlike nearly everybody else; all those who couldn't see what was really going on. Some day she might well have the patience and experience to turn things around. One day she might well be able to strike him down.

But not this day. This day her cheeks were red with embarrassment from things she'd said before and so couldn't deny, (even though she hadn't meant them that way. —It was just her brother twisting words and working people's minds). But it was far too late now. She just didn't care any more. Not one bit.

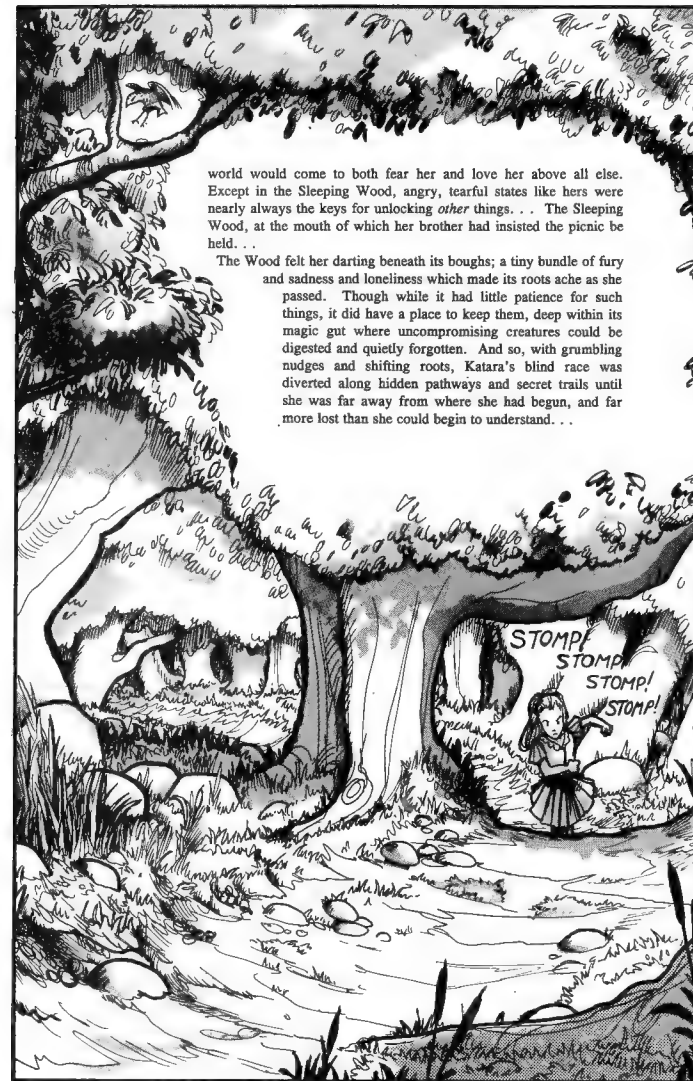
Too much anxiety had been built up; unfair expectations heaped upon her by older people who should have known better, (some of whom secretly wanted to see her buckle and cry anyhow. And her, still too young to realize that adults were not always right and wise by virtue of their age). So much stress. And her evil brother watching all the while, quietly from one side, and always with a friendly smile so nobody could guess. Always watching and measuring and waiting. . .

His last push was barely a touch, a brotherly pat, just enough to send her tumbling into a mental state where some people start to scream and cry in that frightening, hopeless tenor, and where others spin about with fists and rage trying to fight everybody at once. Katara, however, just wanted to run, and because she was smarter and faster than anybody there, she got clean away so that no matter how far they searched, (a few of them somewhat reluctantly), they would never find her unless she chose to go back on her own.

She may well have done so, too. No rage lasts forever. Indeed, by the time she cooled down she would not only have realized that going back was the *right* thing to do, but it would also serve as the very ingredient she needed to make her mind up at last about a number of other things. Pivotal things. Decisions. One of which being that she must grow up somewhat faster than she would have liked, all in order to face her brother and put things right. —Which certainly would have happened.

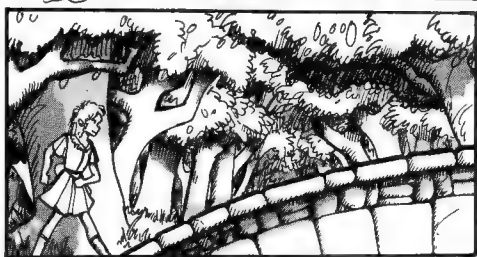
Katara would have grown into a formidable woman, with flashing eyes, and hands to move strong and sure in all matters until the

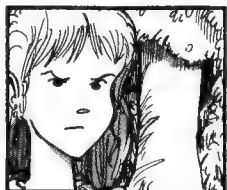
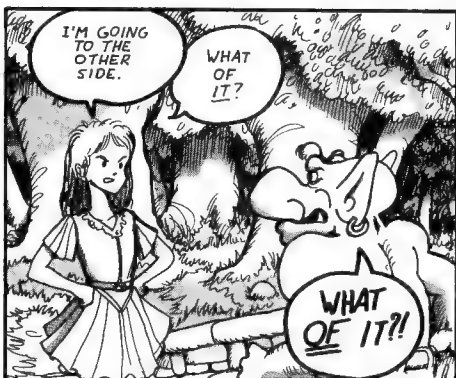
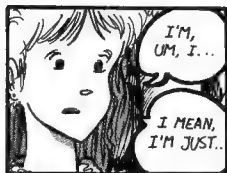
The Crossing



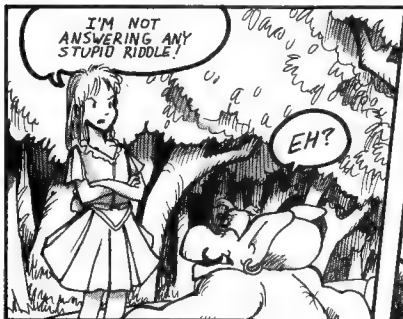
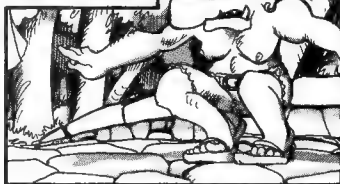
world would come to both fear her and love her above all else. Except in the Sleeping Wood, angry, tearful states like hers were nearly always the keys for unlocking *other* things. . . The Sleeping Wood, at the mouth of which her brother had insisted the picnic be held. . .

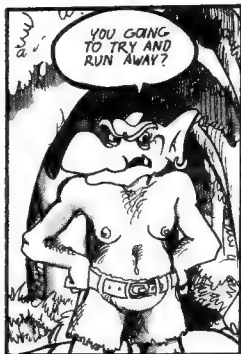
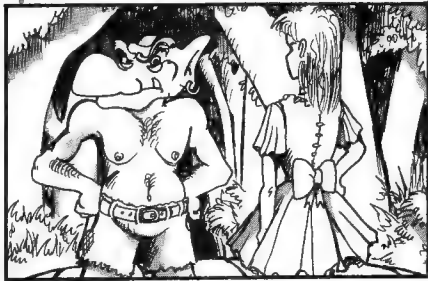
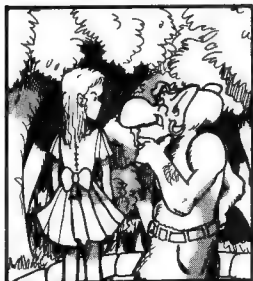
The Wood felt her darting beneath its boughs; a tiny bundle of fury and sadness and loneliness which made its roots ache as she passed. Though while it had little patience for such things, it did have a place to keep them, deep within its magic gut where uncompromising creatures could be digested and quietly forgotten. And so, with grumbling nudges and shifting roots, Katara's blind race was diverted along hidden pathways and secret trails until she was far away from where she had begun, and far more lost than she could begin to understand. . .

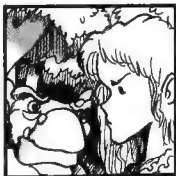
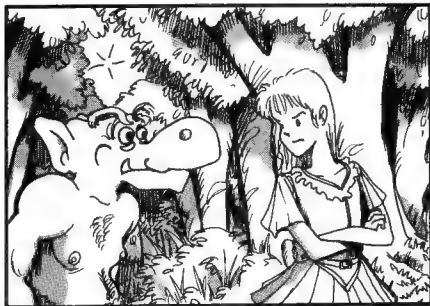


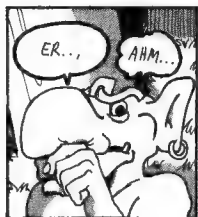
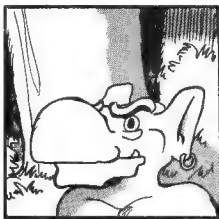
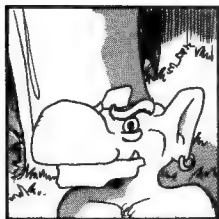
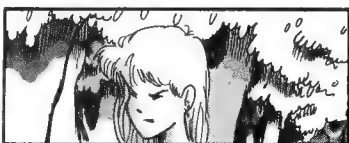
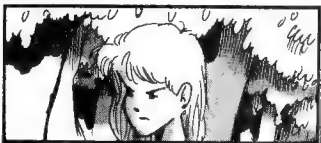
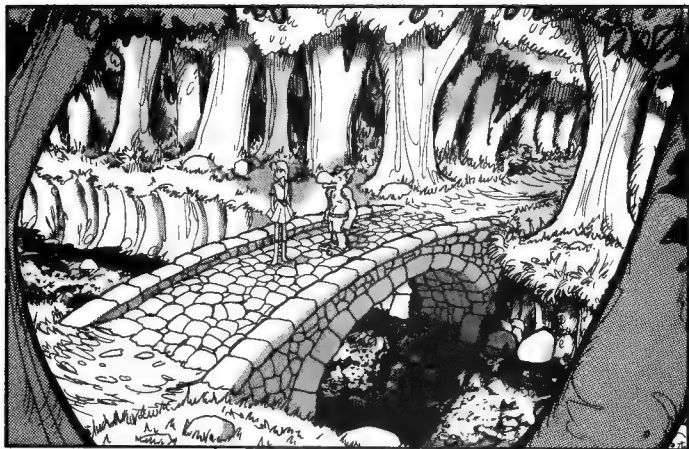












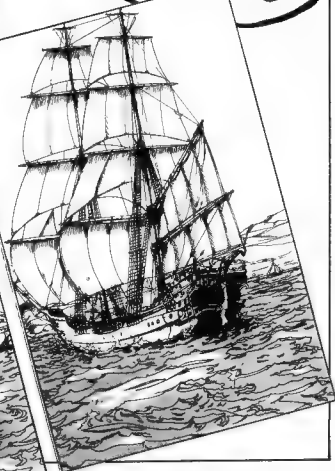




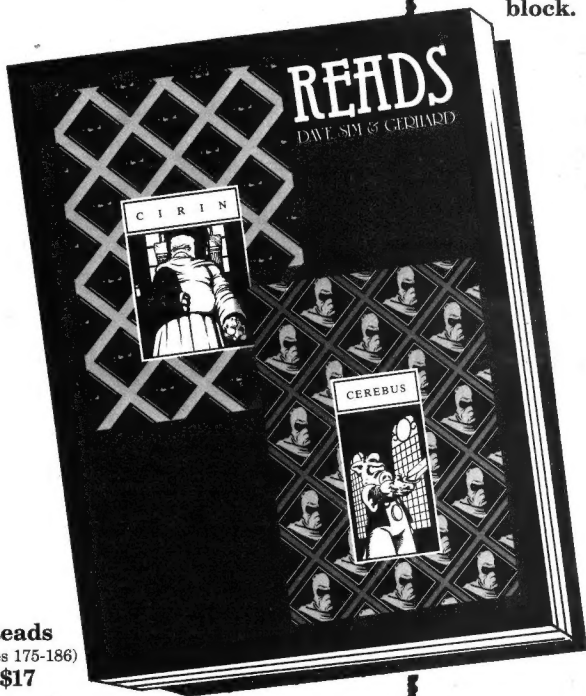
MORE PICTURES!

-TO GIVE SOME IDEA
AS TO WHAT THIEVES
& KINGS ACTUALLY
LOOKS LIKE WHEN IT'S
NOT IN A CEREBUS
PREVIEW, I'VE INCLUDED
HERE AN ASSORTMENT
OF PAGES FROM THE
STORY...

(M)



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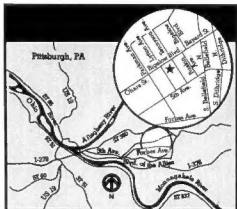
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PITTSTOP!

Where Everyone's a Bizarre Hero



HOLIDAY INN UNIVERSITY CENTER

100 Lytton Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15213
Telephone (412) 682-6200 • Fax (412) 681-4749

DIRECTIONS:

From the Pennsylvania Turnpike coming from the east, take Exit #6 and follow I-376 (west) to Exit 7A (Oakland-885N), bearing right onto Bates St. Follow Bates St. for one-half mile, turn left onto Bouquet St. Follow Bouquet St. to Forbes Ave. Turn right on Forbes Ave., turn left on S. Bellefield Ave., continue to Fifth Ave., turn left, then right on Lytton Ave.

From the Pennsylvania Turnpike coming from the west, take Exit #3 and follow I-79 (south) for about 5 miles. Follow I-279 (south) towards Pittsburgh for about 10 miles. Follow I-579 (south) to I-376 (east) Monroeville. Follow the signs for Forbes Ave./Oakland and make a right onto Forbes Ave. Turn left on S. Bellefield and follow above.

From the Airport, follow Route 60 to I-279 (north) towards Pittsburgh, take I-376 (east) Monroeville to Forbes Ave., turn left on S. Bellefield Ave. and follow above.

PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

September 9, 1995

Okay, once again the local liaison and Retailer du Jour are one and the same:

Jeff Yandora, PHANTOM OF THE ATTIC
214 S. Craig Street
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15213
phone: (412) 621-1210

Jeff will be providing the staff for PITTSTOP as well as setting up a block of tables to sell cutting-edge small press and self-published stuff. He's been a major supporter of independent comics for a number of years and was instrumental in making the Pittsburgh stop one of the better ones on the 1992 Cerebus U.S. Tour. Likewise with flyers and handouts for the show. You can just send them to him at the above address (just put RE: PITTSTOP on the front of the package).

The event is being held at:

HOLIDAY INN UNIVERSITY CENTER
100 Lytton Avenue
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15213
phone: (412) 682-6200 • fax: (412) 681-4749

Should be a pretty reasonably-priced hotel with available space. Just in case they do get booked, you could also try:

15 minute drive:

BEST WESTERN UNIVERSITY CENTER
3401 Blvd. of the Allies, Oakland, Pennsylvania
(412) 683-6100

DAYS INN MONROEVILLE
2727 Mossdale Blvd., Monroeville, Pennsylvania 15146
(412) 856-1610

HAMPTON INN HOTEL
3315 Hamlet Street, Oakland, Pennsylvania
(412) 681-1000

Once again, Steve Bissette will be doing his 'Journeys Into Fear' slide show to benefit the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund (\$3.00 admission charge). That will be in the 'Panther Room' (GGRrOWW) the night before, starting around 5:30 p.m. and running, with my introduction and a short intermission, about three hours.

Once again, we'll be sticking close to the hotel and we'll be in the hotel bar/restaurant after Bissette's slide show and after PITTSTOP itself.

A VERY limited number of tables will be available for the last two shows of 1995:

October 14 – GATHER '95
(James Owen, Teri S. Wood, B.C. Boyer, Steve Laffer)
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Mesa, Arizona
Mesa Sheraton, Centennial Way, Mesa Arizona

December 3 – SPIRITS OF INDEPENDENCE
(Dave 'n' Ger, Larry Marder, Rick Veitch, Steve Bissette)
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Kitchener, Ontario
Walper Terrace Hotel, King & Queen Streets
Kitchener, Ontario

\$15 per table U.S., \$20 Canadian payable to Aardvark-Vanaheim, Inc., Box 1674 Station C, Kitchener, Ontario, Canada N2G 4R2

S.R. BISSETTE'S JOURNEYS INTO



SLIDE SHOW
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 8TH
6:00 p.m.
PANTHER ROOM

**THE
PITT
STOP**

TM

Spirits of Independence Tour ...in Pittsburgh!

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 1995!

10 am-4 pm, Holiday Inn-University Center

100 Lytton Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213

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DAVE SIM & GERHARD	DON SIMPSON	WILLIAM TUCCI	STEVE BISSETTE	MARK OAKLEY	JOE ZABEL	JIM VALENTINO	MARK WHEATLEY
CEREBUS	BIZARRE HEROES	SHI	TYRANT	THIEVES & KINGS	BULLET- PROOF	NORMAL- MAN	RADICAL DREAMER

...and dozens more! Admission is \$3.00 (2 free passes per comic store-present business card at door)!

Steve Bissette's *Journeys Into Fear* slide show Fri. evening, Sept. 8-call above number for info!